

APRIL IS  
HEALTHCARE DECISIONS  
MONTH



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[www.honoringchoicesmass.com](http://www.honoringchoicesmass.com)

# WHAT IS IT?



Honoring Choices Massachusetts is a consumer focused, nonprofit organization which informs, and empowers adults to make a personal health care plan and connect to the best possible care that honors their values and choices, all through their lives.



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# HOW IT WORKS:

Every adult, 18 years and old, or their Health Care Agent and Guardian, has the right to be fully informed about their health care to make choices for care that reflect each individual's care goals, values and priorities.



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**Every competent adult,  
18 years old & older,  
can make a health care plan.**



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# THE EASY 3-STEP PLAN

I. Choose a Health Care Agent in a Health Care Proxy

II. Write down your choices for care in a Personal Directive.

III. Talk with your care providers to align quality care to your choices



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I. Choose a  
Health Care Agent  
in a Health Care  
Proxy

**Ask a trusted person to be your Health Care Agent.**

Your Agent can be a family member, friend, co-worker, faith or community group member — anyone you trust.



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I. Choose a  
Health Care Agent  
in a Health Care  
Proxy

Your Agent is your advocate and tells your family and care providers what's important to you and your instructions for care.

**Your Agent makes health care decisions based on your values, beliefs and the care you want.**



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I. Choose a  
Health Care Agent  
in a Health Care  
Proxy

Your Agent can ‘step in’ if you have a serious illness or injury and your physician determines you are unable to make care decisions for yourself, even for a short while.

If you regain your ability to make your own decisions, your Agent ‘steps back’ and no longer has decision-making powers.



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I. Choose a  
Health Care Agent  
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A spouse or family member does not automatically have the legal authority to make decisions unless appointed in a Health Care Proxy. Read more at <https://malegislature.gov>



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I. Choose a  
Health Care Agent  
in a Health Care  
Proxy

You do not need an attorney to appoint an Agent  
in a Health Care Proxy.

You can do it yourself by downloading the  
free form at [honoringchoicesmass.com](http://honoringchoicesmass.com)



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II. Write down  
your choices  
for care in a  
Personal Directive.

A Personal Directive is **NOT** a legally binding document, but a **personal document** in which you give your Health Care Agent and family specific information and instructions about the kind of care you want, sharing your values, religious and cultural beliefs, and choices and preferences for care.



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II. Write down  
your choices  
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Personal Directive.

The Honoring Choices Personal Directive can be used:

1. As a discussion guide to talk with your Agent, family, friends, clergy and care providers;
2. To give written instructions & information to your Agent and family;
3. To start your personal health care plan, if you have not yet chosen an Agent.



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II. Write down  
your choices  
for care in a  
Personal Directive.

You can do it yourself without the help of an attorney or doctor. Just download and print the free Honoring Choices Personal Directive Instructions & Document from [honoringchoicesmass.com](http://honoringchoicesmass.com)



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III. Talk with your  
care providers  
to align quality  
care to your  
choices

# 5 Things To Talk About With Your Care Providers:



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## I. I'd like to understand more about my health or illness and treatment options:

Here's what I know about my health or illness.  
Here's what I'd like to know today. What's ahead for me? What information would help me to plan for the future?



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2. I want to discuss my goals and explore  
the care I want and do not want:

Given my personal values, beliefs and priorities,  
here's what is important to me.

Here's what worries or concerns me.



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III. Talk with your care providers to align quality care to your choices

### 3. Let's discuss my care plan and writing down my choices in planning documents:

What's the plan for getting me to my goals? What are the next steps?. I want to choose a Health Care Agent; can you help me with a Health Care Proxy? Here's a copy of my Health Care Proxy; can you place it in my medical record?



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## 4. I'd like to make sure you know my choices and that my medical record is up-to-date:

Let's review my current health or illness, and changes in my priorities and choices. I'd like to revise/add a planning document and review the documents in my record.



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5. I'd like to make sure my care providers  
honor my choices all through my life:

In an emergency, or if I can't speak with you, how will my  
choices be followed? I'd like to bring in my family/Agent  
to talk about my plan and honoring my choices.



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Agents and Honoring Choices:  
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